REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Abraham and his Supervisor, Philip Tucker, for the helpful and courteous discussion held with their U.S. representative on December 9, 2010. At that time, Applicants' U.S. representative argued that the method of the present invention comprises forming a circumferential web that contacts the molded piece around the entire periphery of the molded piece, in the area of the largest extent of the piece. The following is intended to expand upon the issues discussed during the interview.

The Final Office action dated September 10, 2010, and the references cited therein have been received and carefully reviewed.

By this amendment, claim 1 has been amended to further define and further clarify the inventive aspects of Applicants' method.

Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the circumferential web of claim 1 is in contact the molded piece around the entire periphery of the molded piece.

The circumferential connection, that is, the connection over the entire periphery of the molded piece, can clearly be seen from the representation in Fig. 4 of the present application.

The accompanying text on page 9, 4th paragraph of the

description states that:

> " . . the cap 124, after a complete working of the outer contour 128 and the inner contour 130 is connected with the mold blank 126 via a circulating, therefore circular membrane 132, indeed, in particular, in the outer boundary region and preferably in the area of the largest extent of the cap 124. In the embodiment example, altogether three slot-shaped through holes 133, 134, 136 running along an elbow are proposed.".

In the corresponding description provided in the German language on page 9, 4th paragraph, of WO 2005/051220 (the publication of International Application No. PCT/EP2004/013359), reference is made to "*umlaufende, also zirkuläre Membran 132, die mit dem Rohling verbunden ist*" (meaning "*circumferential, i.e. circular membrane 132 connected to the blank*". It is submitted that the term "*umlaufende*" in WO 2005/051220 was improperly translated as "*circulating*" for the U.S. National Phase application, when the more accurate translation of this term is "*circumferential*".

Moreover, since the membrane 132 has through holes 133, 134, 136 (see FIG. 4), logically, the membrane must be connected around the entire periphery of the cap 124: if the membrane is not so connected, the membrane cannot comprise any through holes. Rather, the cap 124 would be connected with several membranes spaced apart from each other.

Besides the above-noted imprecise translation of the German term "*umlaufende*" on page 9, 4th paragraph, it is submitted that the translator incorrectly translated other passages in the International application, or translated them such that these terms cannot be understood in the context in which they appear.

For instance, on page 3, 2"d paragraph from bottom of WO 2005/051220, it is explained that the web-like or membranous connection is designed at least "*bereichsweise umlaufend*" (meaning "*partly circumferential*"), in order to try to achieve a comprehensive scope of protection. However, the term "*bereichsweise*" was not even translated by the translator.

Clearly, a comparison between "*circumferential web*" and "*partly circumferential web*" should make obvious what is meant by "*umlaufender Steg*" (meaning "*circumferential web*").

In addition, it is the Applicants' belief that the term "*umlaufendes Fräsen*" (meaning "*circumferential milling*") has also been translated improperly by the translator. On page 3, 3rd line from bottom, of WO 2005/051220, it is disclosed that the circumferential web is cut by circular milling ("*zirkuläres Fräsen*"). "*Zirkuläres Fräsen*" has also been referred to in the application as "*umlaufendes Fräsen*" (meaning "*circumferential milling*): "*zirkuläres, d.h. umlaufendes Fräsen*". The translator's translation of "*umlaufendes Fräsen*" is "*rotating*

milling" (page 3, three lines from the bottom of the page of the English translation), which clearly is not a technically correct translation.

For the above reasons, it is Applicants' belief that International Application No. PCT/EP2004/013359 designating the U.S., and thus the present National Phase application, provide clear support for a circumferential web that is connected around the entire periphery of the molded piece.

These conclusions are supported by a statement from Stefan Fecher, one of the inventors, in the Declaration which is attached hereto.

It is submitted that none of the cited prior art references to Filser et al., Bodenmiller et al., and Suttor et al. disclose or suggest forming a circumferential web that is attached along the entire periphery of the molded piece.

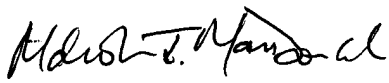
Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1, 6-11, 13, and 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Filser et al., in view of Bodenmiller et al., and Suttor et al., and the rejection of claims 3-4, 12, 14-16, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Filser et al., in view of Bodenmiller et al., should be favorably reconsidered and withdrawn.

Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance and early notice of such action is

earnestly solicited. If any final points remain that can be clarified by telephone, Examiner Abraham is respectfully encouraged to contact Applicants' attorney at the number indicated below.

Applicants hereby petition the Commissioner for Patents to extend the time for reply to the Final Office action dated September 10, 2010, for two (2) months from December 10, 2010, to February 10, 2011. A duly completed credit card authorization form is attached to effect payment of the extension fee.

Respectfully submitted



Date: February 10, 2011

Malcolm J. MacDonald
Reg. No. 40,250
(703) 837-9600 Ext. 24